

Walter E. Long Park/Travis County Expo Center-Market and Feasibility Study Consultant Contract Recommendation

Contract Recommendation

This contract will provide the Parks and Recreation Department with consulting services to complete a market feasibility study for the Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park (Walter E. Long Park) and Travis County Exposition Center (Expo Center) facilities.

Market and Feasibility Study Overview

The City of Austin, working in partnership with Travis County, is conducting a Market and Feasibility Study for Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park and the Travis County Exposition Center. The purpose of the study is to determine potential future uses of the Travis County Exposition Center and Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park to meet community needs and regional demand for the park and facility.

Background

The City of Austin owns the 1,872-acre tract of parkland known as Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park. The park is designated as a Metropolitan Park, which are the largest parks in the Austin park system and have a service area that includes the entire city. Walter E. Long Park is operated and managed by the City of Austin. The Travis County Exposition Center is a multi-purpose facility consisting of four primary structures on approximately 128 acres of this parkland. The Expo Center is operated and managed by Travis County under a 50-year lease agreement that expires in December 2033.

History

Walter E. Long Metro Park

The City of Austin acquired the parkland in 1965. A master plan was completed in 1966, and updated in 1968 and again in 1978. Components of the master plan that have been implemented include boat ramps, fishing piers, picnic areas, volleyball courts, a shooting range, and a model airplane area. Components of the master plan that are pending implementation include a golf course and development of the southwestern portion of the park adjacent to the Expo Center.

Expo Center

Initially constructed in 1983, the Expo Center was built to host livestock exhibitions, equestrian shows, rodeos, and other recreational, education, cultural, and historical events. The Expo Center is the current home of Star of Texas Fair and Rodeo, as well as a wide variety of community events and trade shows including horse and dog shows, car and truck shows, races and triathlons, arts and craft shows, weddings and formal banquets.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine potential future uses of the Travis County Exposition Center and Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park to meet community needs and regional demand for the park and facility. To do this, the selected consultant will:

- Review the site location, regional context, and long-range plans for this area
- Conduct stakeholder meetings and gather input
- Conduct market analysis including industry trends, comparable facilities, and market demand
- Make facility recommendations for both the multipurpose facility and overall park

Key points about the study

- Process is at a VERY early stage
- Current activities are exploratory and focus on data gathering and analysis
- Study will be used to help determine desired long-term vision and next steps
- Long-term next steps will have a significant public engagement process

Public Input Opportunities

The Parks and Recreation Department has hosted two public input meetings prior to the consultant being selected: one in July 2014, to provide an update and gather feedback from the Colony Park Neighborhood and one in August 2014, to provide an update and gather input from a wide range of community stakeholders including park and facility users, nearby neighbors and businesses, and anyone (citywide) interested in the study. The notes from these meetings will be provided to the consultant that is selected to conduct the study. There will be additional stakeholder meetings coordinated by the consultant while the study is being conducted.

Process and Timeline for Study

A request for proposals for consultants interested in working on the study was released by the City of Austin in July 2014. Proposals were due in September 2014, and evaluations completed in October 2014. The contract recommendation for the consultant to complete the study will be presented to the City Council for contract award on December 11, 2014. The study is expected to begin in 2015. The timeline for the study will be known after a contract is signed with the successful consultant.



Walter E. Long Metropolitan Park Travis County Expo Center

Market and Feasibility Study Contract Recommendation

Brian Block, Development Administrator
City of Austin- Parks & Recreation Department

Presentation to Contracts and Concessions Committee
of Parks and Recreation Board

November 25, 2014



Walter E. Long Master Plan

Updated in 1978



Acquired
parkland in 1965

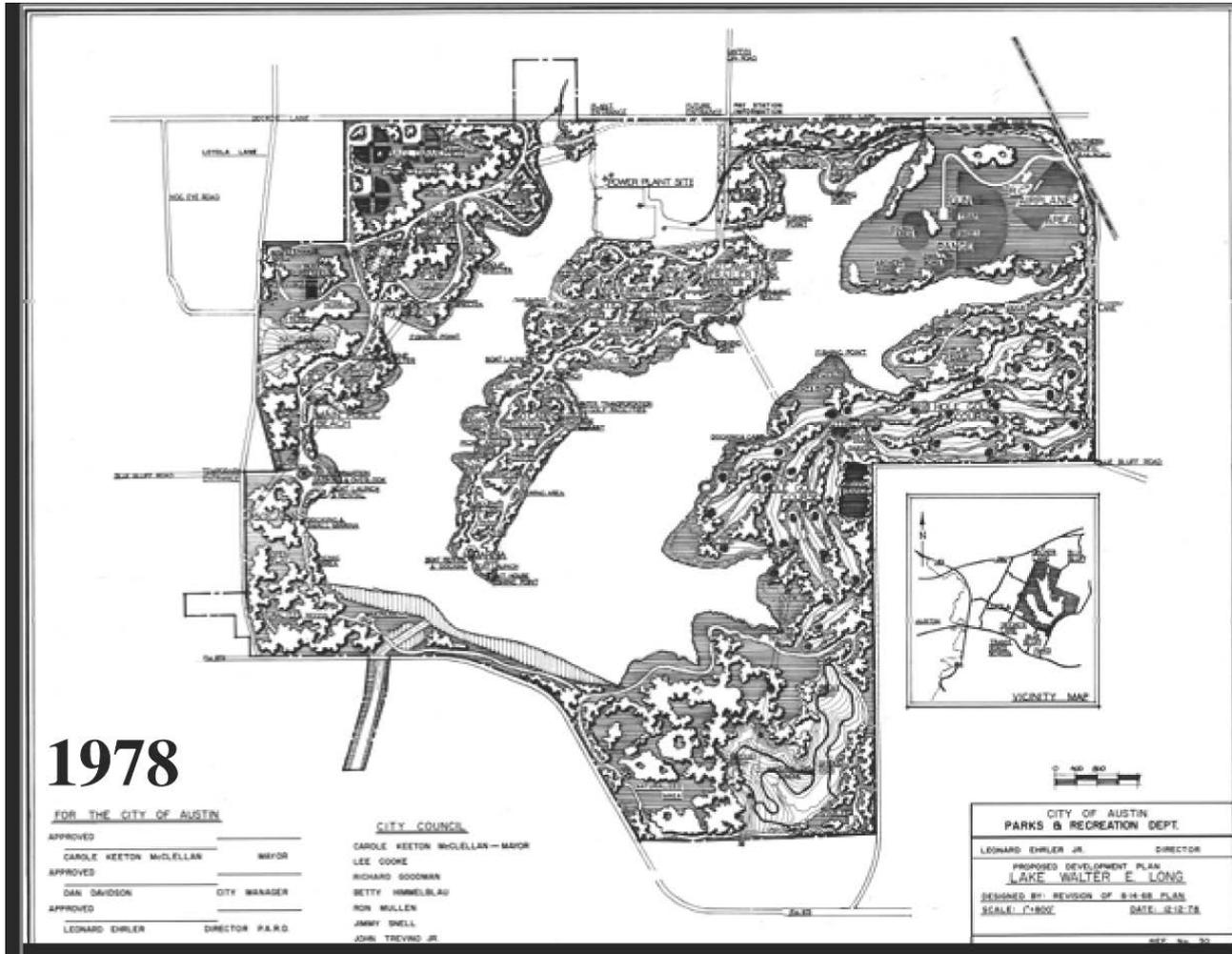
1872.33 acres

Plan
Implemented:

- ✓ Fishing Piers
- ✓ Boat Ramps
- ✓ Picnic Areas
- ✓ Volleyball Courts
- ✓ Aeromodelers
- ✓ Rifle Range

Pending:

- Golf Course
- SW portion of park near Expo Center



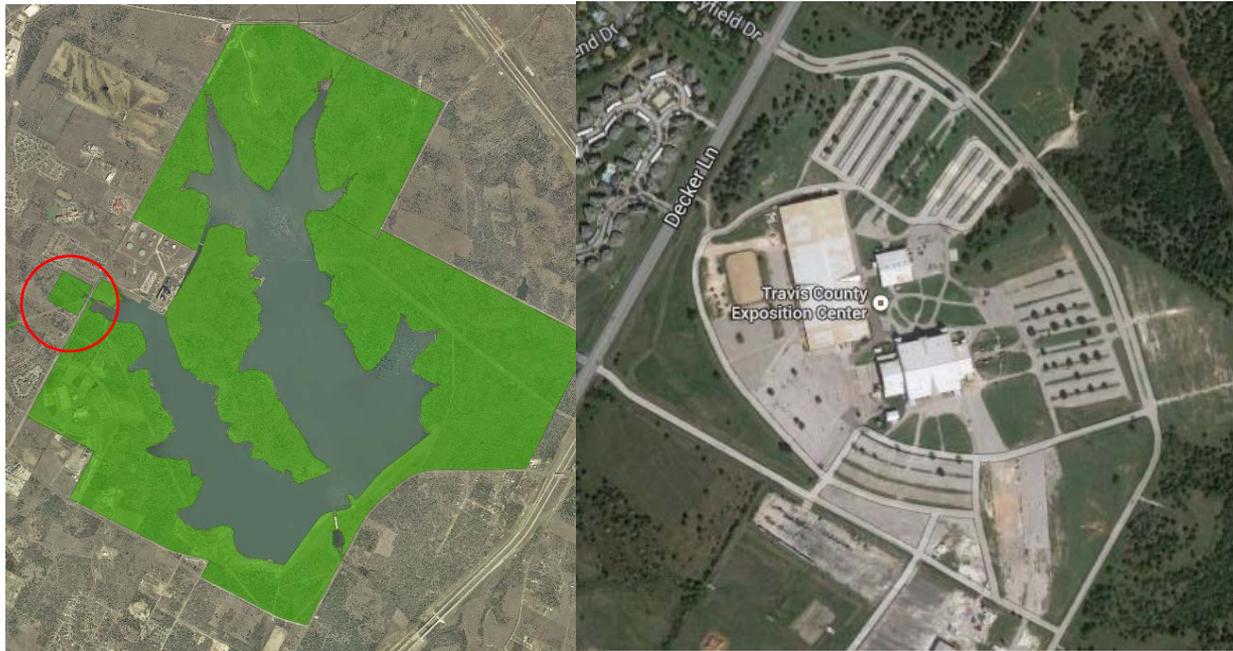
Walter E. Long Park Today

- Remains City owned
- Current uses:
 - Travis County Expo Center
 - Fishing
 - Boating
 - Canoeing/Kayaking
 - Picnicking
- Service Area: Citywide
- Major Community Changes
 - Population Growth
 - SH 130



Travis County Expo Center

Operated and Managed by Travis County



Travis County
Expo Center Built
in 1983

128 acres

- 50-year lease with Travis County
- Expires 2033
- Built to host livestock exhibitions, rodeos, equestrian shows, and other recreational events



Travis County Expo Center



Annual Events

- Star of Texas Fair and Rodeo Austin
- Republic of Texas Biker Rally
- Livestock, Auto, & Craft Shows
- Races & Triathlons
- Weddings and Banquets

Four primary structures

Luedcke Arena – 25,000 sq. ft., 9,400 capacity (6,400 seated)

Show Barn – 210,000 sq. ft.

Banquet Hall – 15,000 sq. ft. 1,000 capacity

Skyline Club – 10,000 sq. ft., 1,500 sq. ft. balcony, 450 capacity



Interlocal Agreement



- April 17, 2014 – City Council authorized negotiation and execution of an interlocal agreement with Travis County to share the cost for a market and feasibility study

- May 6, 2014 – The City of Austin and Travis County entered into an interlocal agreement for the market and feasibility study

- The City and County agreed to:
 - Hire a qualified consultant to conduct the study and produce a report of findings to the City and County
 - Jointly participate in the development of the scope of work, evaluation, and consultant selection
 - Share the consultant fees up to \$50,000 each, after deducting \$25,000 in funding pledged by the Star of Texas Fair and Rodeo



Purpose of Market & Feasibility Study



- Review site location, regional context, and long-range plans for this area
- Conduct stakeholder meetings and gather input
 - Robust community engagement process including neighbors, business, and current user groups
- Market analysis
 - Industry trends
 - Comparable facilities
 - Market gap and demand analysis
- Facility Recommendations
 - Both for multipurpose facility and overall park
- Key Points
 - Process is at a VERY early stage
 - Current activities are exploratory and focus on data gathering and analysis
 - Study will be used to help determine desired long-term next steps
 - Long-term next steps will have a significant public engagement process



Project Schedule:	
City and Travis County Entered into Interlocal Agreement for Joint Study	May 6, 2014
RFP Released	July 14, 2014
Community Outreach Meeting	August 27, 2014
Proposals Due	September 9, 2014
Proposal Evaluation	October 24, 2014
Present to Contract & Concession Committee	November 25, 2014
Present to Parks & Recreation Board	December 9, 2014
Present to Austin City Council	December 11, 2014
Market & Feasibility Study Completed	Summer 2015
Consultant Presents Study Findings and Recommendations to City and County Staff	Summer 2015
Presentation of Study Findings and Recommendations to Parks Board, City Council and County Commissioners	Fall 2015
Partners come together to review feasibility, phasing, and funding strategies to implement the study recommendations	Late 2015 - Early 2016



Possible Long-Term Next Steps



Next steps will be determined after the study is completed, but some possible outcomes could include (but are not limited to):

- ❑ No change to existing facilities;
- ❑ Improve existing facilities with future bonds (estimated timeframe tbd);
- ❑ Enter into a Public-Private Partnership
 - Could include (but not limited to): construction of improvements, management and operations, programming, other services. (estimated time frame 1-2 years);
- ❑ Update the 1978 Plan for Walter E. Long Metro Park; (estimated time frame 1 year).

Contract Evaluation & Next Steps



- PARD has completed a thorough evaluation and has identified a qualified vendor who has demonstrated the capacity to deliver the requirements outlined in the scope within the project budget.
- Upon approval of City Council to authorize the award, negotiation and execution of a contract, PARD will seek to negotiate a contract within the project budget of \$125,000.